

The Alexandria Gazette.

THURSDAY EVE'G, MAY 22, 1862.

GENERAL NEWS.

The reports from England concerning the tests upon iron-clad armor by projectiles of the Armstrong gun being contradictory, it is left to naval authorities to act upon the facts developed by experience. The projectiles used by the Confederate battery immediately below Richmond were equal in momentum to any employed by Sir Robert Armstrong, but they had no effect on the Monitor or Galena, whose sheathing is but three inches thick, and not covering the entire exposed surface of the vessel, was riddled.

Gen. Butler has distinctly stated to the people of New Orleans that no person who "preserved quiet and order," and refrained from giving aid and comfort to the enemies of his Government, "will be disturbed either in person or property." No oaths have been tendered to or required of the citizens of New Orleans, and supplies of provisions are allowed by all the usual modes of transportation.

A gentleman is now in Boston, previously to his departure for Europe, for the purpose of making some arrangements for the working of a discovery he has made for a fuel for sea-going steamers. A distinguished British Admiral, who had casually heard of it, called it "the discovery of the age." At present coals for some twelve or fifteen days only can be taken on board ship; but by this discovery fifty days full supply can be taken.

The U. S. government will, it is supposed, act upon General Totten's views in relation to the contest between artillery and iron plates, and continue the improvement in the former, while they do not neglect the latter. No plating is practicable which heavy artillery cannot destroy.

The U. S. War Department has made a contract for a twenty inch gun, which, rifled, will require an elongated shot weighing one ton, and, with smooth bore, a round ball of a thousand pounds. This gun is unparalleled in size since the day of huge guns with granite boulders for shot, such as were used in the fortifications at the Dardanelles.

A letter from Norfolk, in the N. Y. Tribune, says:—"Recent visitors to Norfolk describe it as a city of the dead, almost all the stores being closed, grass growing in the streets, and few residents to be seen. Diligent inquiry discovered four Union men, two of whom were soldiers in the last war with Great Britain. Major Trott, of the Post Office Department, was treated with rudeness by "reliable Union men," to whom he took letters from the Hon. Joseph Segar, and is still seeking a person willing to serve as Federal Postmaster. Those who call the Hon. J. S. Millson a Union man, speak rather from past than present evidence. He has not expressed sentiments of loyalty to the Government to any visitors, although among them have been a number of old acquaintances in Congress, including Representatives from the Border States, who vainly tried to draw him into conversation on politics."

The Presbytery of California, at its late meeting, adopted an overture to the General Assembly (O. S.) in favor of a re-union of the Old and New School Churches.

The record of the French police concerning the Captain, three times Admiral, and now unconfirmed Brigadier-Gen. Zermann, shows that this fellow is considered by the police in France as one of the smartest and most skilful of impostors. Whatever documents, titles, patents for military or naval grades, or for decorations, may have been filed by him at the War Department, or deposited in the hands of any Senator, are said to be spurious counterfeits and forgeries.

An authorized dispatch from Washington states that M. Mercier, the French Minister, went to Richmond, on his late visit there, with the full knowledge and consent of President Lincoln—that he had no instructions from his government—that he held no communication with anybody in Richmond which he could not report to the U. S. State Department—that he wished to see and judge for himself of the views and expectations of the Confederates—and that the visit was entirely unofficial, in every respect.

In the Circuit Court for Baltimore city, yesterday, Judge Krebs delivered an important and elaborate opinion, refusing to grant a divorce *a vinculo matrimonii* to Mary S. McKim, complainant in case where the parties were under age, and married without the consent of their parents.

Mr. Morrill, of Vermont says the present U. S. public debt now is about \$600,000,000 which at seven per cent. would be \$42,000,000 per annum.

None of the British iron-clads have yet answered properly to the helm when at sea.

Some curious coincidences of capture and recapture recently occurred in Kentucky. A party of Confederates rescued a couple of Confederate prisoners, who were being tried for treason at Mount Sterling. When they had advanced a short distance beyond Hazle Green, they were overtaken by a detachment of the Home Guard, and the whole party captured. On their route back to Mount Sterling, the Federals and their prisoners were met by another and a larger squad of Confederates, who took the party and started on towards Pound Gap, but had not proceeded far when another Federal company met them, and took and conveyed them—forty in number—to Lexington, where they now are.

There was considerable excitement this morning at the corner of Pennsylvania avenue and Seventh street, Washington, caused by the arrest of several negroes from Montgomery county, Md., who had ran away, and were passing through the city, with a regiment. The arrests were made by the U. S. Marshal, the owners being on the spot to identify their property. An attempt was made by some of the soldiers to get the negroes off, and, at one time, it was feared that a difficulty would ensue. A very large crowd gathered, one man was knocked down, and one of the negroes taken off by the soldiers, but the Marshal summoned a posse of police, and went after the regiment to recover the negroes.

In the N. Y. Court of General Sessions, Judge McCunn gave a decision to the effect that lager beer was not an intoxicating drink, and hence did not come within the meaning of the recent act of the Legislature, prohibiting the sale of liquors at places of public amusement.

F. REIGN NEWS.

The Scotia has arrived with Liverpool dates to the 10th instant. Cotton fluctuates, owing to the reports from this country and about intervention. Breadstuffs dull, but with little change.

Various rumors continued to float about relative to the political significance of M. Mercier's visit to Richmond, but they are all apparently disposed of by an announcement made in the House of Commons by Mr. Layard, on the 9th instant, to the effect that M. Mercier went to Richmond without any instructions from his own government, and that his visit was with no political result whatever.

Lord Palmerston, in a speech in Parliament, said the policy of England and France with respect to America had been in the most perfect accord. In the Trent affair the conduct of the French Emperor had been most honorable, and the relations of two diplomatists had never been more frank and cordial than those of M. Mercier and Lord Lyons.

The U. S. frigate Constellation and gunboat Tuscarora were at Algeiras on the 4th. The gunboat Ino was at Cadiz on the 28th. The Sumter remained at Gibraltar.

A debate took place in the House of Commons on the distress, and suffering, which prevailed in England and Ireland.

The London Times editorially, says:—"It is for the honor of the nation that this distress shall be known, that the world may see the sacrifices made by England in the cause of neutrality."

The Independence Belge says:—"The object of M. Lavalette's recent visit to London was to induce England to consent to a common intervention in America, and England has agreed; but only on one condition, viz:—the previous settlement of the Roman question.—The imperial government lent an ear to this proposition, and it has thus led the English Cabinet to confer with it as to an intervention in American affairs."

It is officially notified that Queen Victoria will hold no levee or drawing room this year.

The Herald's Paris correspondent says the prevalent belief is that a solution of the Roman question is more distant than the present aspect of affairs would lead people to suppose.

The negotiation of the new treaty between the United States and Great Britain for the prevention of the slave trade with Africa was announced in Parliament on the 8th instant, and the news was received with great satisfaction. The Times views this treaty as not being a blow at the South, but as a victory over the North.

An official dispatch from Lord Lyons to Earl Russell says:—"Although the power to make arbitrary political arrests has not been formally renounced by the Executive Government, it has not, so far as I know, been recently exercised. I am not aware of any British subject being now arbitrarily detained as a political prisoner."

A meeting on the 15th instant, of the "Union Democrats and Union Whigs, and other conservative voters," of the fourth ward in Washington city, declared, among other things, "uncompromising opposition to the effort which is now in progress to impose upon this city the odious task of schooling negro children."